



Improving the research assessment system

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Context

- The research process is in (digital) transition
 - Less linear, more collaborative and open, diversity of outputs; team science
- The system currently used to assess research and researchers is not fit for this new reality
 - Rewards quantity and publication venue rather than quality; does not reward sharing, collaboration and outputs other than publications
- A reform is needed to increase the efficiency, impact and social responsibility of research
 - Requires a system and cultural change, involving institutions, funders and researchers
- **Council Conclusions** on ERA (Dec 2020) and on research careers (May 2021) invite the Commission to work with stakeholders to effect this change

Evaluation of proposals in Horizon Europe

- **‘Excellence’** criterion:
 - Under the assessment of **the soundness of the proposed methodology**: quality of the open science practices to be assessed
- **‘Quality and efficiency of implementation’** criterion:
 - Under the list of **achievements**: diverse outputs considered (not just publications); qualitative assessment (no JIF); past publications to be open access, datasets to be FAIR and “as open as possible as closed as necessary”
 - Under the **capacity** of participants and consortium as a whole: applicants to explain expertise to practice open science

Open science practices:

- Early and open sharing of research (for example through preregistration, registered reports, pre-prints or crowd-sourcing);
- Research output management including research data management (RDM);
- Measures to ensure reproducibility of research outputs;
- Providing open access to all research outputs (e.g. publications, data, software, models, algorithms, and workflows) through deposition in trusted repositories;
- Participation in open peer-review;
- Involving all relevant knowledge actors including citizens, civil society and end-users in the co-creation of R&I agendas and content (such as citizen science).

Policy objective

- Objective of the Commission: **facilitate and speed up reforms to research assessment**
- Towards a research assessment system that:
 - Promotes qualitative judgement with peer-review, supported by a more responsible use of quantitative indicators;
 - Considers the value and impact of a diversity of research outputs;
 - Incentivizes open collaboration and early knowledge and data sharing;
 - Rewards the diversity of tasks of researchers, and supports team science.

A European initiative

- An **alliance** of funders, research performing organisations (including universities) and national evaluation agencies, willing to take the lead in reforming the current research assessment system
 - Agreement on **principles** and **actions**;
 - Building on DORA and other declarations;
 - **Committing signatories to act** according to a roadmap for delivery;
 - **Joint ownership** of the initiative by the participating organisations;
 - **Monitoring** of progress.

Consultation

- The Commission **is currently consulting** research funders, research performers, policy makers, and other stakeholders, in order to best frame a European initiative.
 - Meeting with 130 representatives (March)
 - Bilateral meetings with many stakeholders (May-October)
- Achievement so far:
 - General support to a coalition approach
 - **Overall convergence** on the rationale, principles and actions proposed for reforming research assessment

Next steps

- Finalise the **consultations** and publish a **report**, and organise a **meeting with stakeholders** in November/December 2021.
- Translate the agreed rationale, principles and actions, into a **draft Memorandum of Understanding**, and introduce a timetable for reforms.
- **Political announcement** of the initiative at an event of the French Presidency in February 2022.
- **Roll out** the initiative during 2022.

Questions for discussion

- *What measures could national and regional authorities take to support and incentivise a reform of research assessment by research funding and research performing organisations? Would they encourage national/regional funding agencies to become members of the coalition described above?*
- *Are there any further actions that the European Commission could/should take to further support a reform of the research assessment system?*

Thank you



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